

# Wootton Park School

Wootton Hall Park, Northampton NN4 0JA

## Inspection dates

9–10 July 2019

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Outstanding</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Outstanding</b>
Early years provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school

- The highly ambitious and unwavering determination of the principal, supported by senior leaders and governors, ensures that standards of academic achievement, personal development and behaviour are exceptionally high.
- Pupils' personal development and the welfare of pupils is outstanding. Leaders are highly committed to ensuring the well-being of pupils and staff.
- Leaders have established a strong culture of vigilance, and effective arrangements are in place to safeguard pupils, particularly those at risk of harm.
- Pupils and staff are proud to be members of the school's community. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who shared their opinions would strongly recommend the school.
- The behaviour of pupils is exemplary. Relationships between pupils and with staff are extremely positive. Pupils value their education and rarely miss a day from school.
- Expectations are consistently high, and pupils are very responsive to these.
- Pupils appreciate the wide variety of extra-curricular activities available to them.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is consistently high. Pupils are enthusiastic learners and they maximise opportunities to improve their learning.
- Learning in the early years is outstanding. Children make substantial progress from their starting points. Over time, a high proportion of children have reached a good level of development. Children are extremely well prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils' academic achievement is strong. At key stage 1, the proportion of pupils achieving at least the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics exceeds the national average.
- The proportion of Year 1 pupils meeting the national standard in phonics has been well above average for the past two years.
- Staff ensure that the needs of vulnerable learners are met. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve as well as other pupils in the school.
- The leadership of the curriculum is strong, with a clear vision for the future as new key stages commence. Leaders are aware of the need to ensure that the very best standards are maintained as the curriculum continues to evolve.

## **Full report**

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Ensure that the high standards of achievement are sustained as new key stages are added through the continued evolution of a carefully constructed curriculum.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Outstanding

- The principal, together with senior leaders and governors, leads with unapologetic ambition and an unwavering determination to secure the highest possible standards of education and well-being for pupils and staff. Pupils and the vast majority of parents and carers describe the school as a welcoming and inclusive place to learn.
- Pupils and staff are proud to be part of the school's community. An exceptionally high proportion of parents would recommend the school. One parent summed up the views of others in saying: 'We are very lucky that this school, with its dedicated team of teachers and other supporting adults, was available to us.'
- The promotion of pupils' understanding of British values and of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development lies at the heart of the school's work. This has been recognised by the accreditation of the SMSC award at silver level and is underpinned by the school's key principles of high attainment for all, the importance of public service and contributing to a stronger society. Inspectors found all three elements to be shining examples of the school's strong practice and culture.
- The principal has a thorough and comprehensive understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further improvement. Leaders make frequent checks on the quality of provision, including the delivery of the curriculum, personal development and welfare, and safeguarding. Staff welcome the school's quality-assurance processes. Leaders adopt a thoughtful and reflective approach to the workload of staff. As one member of staff commented: 'Leaders are acutely aware of work load and value the voice of teachers in combatting these issues while maintaining the standards we all wish to uphold.'
- Pastoral care is a distinctive strength of the school. Pupils and parents recognise that staff in all year groups will go the extra mile to ensure pupils' academic, social and emotional well-being. Leaders act swiftly and decisively when improvements are identified and required.
- The leadership of the provision for pupils with SEND is strong. Extra funding is used very effectively to provide highly personalised support from leaders and additional adults across all key stages, to ensure that these pupils make strong progress.
- The additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils is used well to ensure that this group of pupils is able to access the curriculum, receive personalised support when required and participate fully in the life of the school. Leaders provide a wide range of enriching curriculum experiences. Disadvantaged pupils are achieving as strongly as their peers.
- Leaders' actions ensure that the spending of the Year 7 catch-up funding for literacy and numeracy has a strong impact on pupils' outcomes.
- The school's programme for the professional development of staff is of a high quality. It is seamlessly woven into the school's performance management systems, with positive effect. An overwhelming proportion of staff who responded to Ofsted's staff survey reported that they strongly value the school's programme of continuing

professional development, which motivates them within a climate of trust and respect. Staff morale is exceptionally high.

- The leadership of the curriculum, while continuing to evolve, is highly effective. Across all year groups, the curriculum is thoughtfully constructed and is broad and balanced. A high proportion of pupils are due to commence learning across the English baccalaureate suite of subjects. Leaders regularly review the effectiveness of the curriculum, particularly given some of the innovations planned for key stage 4. Leaders ensure that the acquisition of knowledge is carefully planned to help pupils sustain the strong progress they are currently making.
- Leaders take determined action to ensure that they learn from other educational providers and can measure their performance against the highest standards. They receive effective support from other schools who are members of the SWAN Teaching School Alliance, particularly in the development of the curriculum and the rigour of processes to ensure accurate assessment.
- Leaders ensure that the additional funding for physical education (PE) and sport is used to good effect. The funding is used to ensure that pupils have access to high-quality PE and play resources, for sports coaching for pupils and staff, and for participation in sports events and activities, including swimming.
- Pupils in all year groups appreciate the learning and enjoyment they gain from participating in extra-curricular activities. Leaders track this provision rigorously. Over two thirds of pupils are involved in one or more extra-curricular activities, such as choir, Eco club, film club, archery, football, dance and yoga.

### **Governance of the school**

- The governance of the school is strong. Relationships between governors and senior leaders are highly positive and constructive, based on a mutual understanding of support and challenge. Together they uncompromisingly strive for excellence and have a strong vision for the future success of the school.
- Governors are kept very well informed by senior leaders. Leaders' and governors' diligent documentation illustrates that they have a highly cohesive understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are clear about their priorities for future development.
- Governors hold senior leaders stringently to account. Their records show they ask searching questions of school leaders, particularly with regard to pupils' performance. They fully understand their responsibilities in relation to their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Governors are proactive and make regular visits to the school in support of its development priorities.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders ensure that there is a strong culture of vigilance. Pupils reported unanimously to inspectors that they feel safe in the school and believe they are looked after well. They know who they can talk to about worries or concerns, should they need to. An exceptionally high proportion of the

parents who responded to Ofsted's survey, and those who spoke with inspectors, agree.

- Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe as part of a carefully constructed programme of learning for personal development. Pupils talk confidently about how to keep themselves safe. For example, they learn about 'stranger danger', online safety and challenging issues such as child sexual exploitation.
- Staff understand what to do if they have any concerns about a pupil's well-being. They receive regular high-quality training and updates. Leaders tenaciously analyse safeguarding trends so that they know precisely which issues require the greatest focus.
- School records demonstrate that leaders' actions to keep vulnerable pupils safe are timely and effective. Records of safeguarding concerns are detailed, comprehensive and stored securely. Leaders work highly effectively with external agencies and parents to ensure that pupils receive the right support when it is needed. The recruitment of a full-time 'well-being' coach has further improved the safeguarding arrangements in the school.
- The checks made on the employment of staff are robust and monitored by governors. Effective procedures are in place to ensure that all visitors to the school are suitably vetted.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Outstanding

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding. Pupils' learning and progress are consistently and remarkably strong. Pupils are highly engaged and show a willingness to challenge themselves in both key stages 1 and 3.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are mutually positive and respectful. Pupils thrive, because learning is well organised and very aptly planned to deepen pupils' understanding by developing their thinking skills. Pupils report that they find their lessons enjoyable and stimulating.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is very strong and used highly effectively to question pupils and challenge their thinking. Teachers use innovative strategies to maximise the use of time in lessons. In a key stage 3 mathematics lesson, for example, pupils relished the challenge of breaking a series of codes by consolidating their understanding of factorising increasingly complex equations. In key stage 1, pupils have quickly developed confidence in using specific vocabulary, such as similes and adjectives in writing, and division in mathematics. A comment from pupils typically reflected their views, when they told an inspector that: 'Teachers keep lessons moving along.'
- Expectations are very high. Teachers are uncompromising in ensuring that pupils meet the high standards expected of them. They plan work which ensures that pupils can access the curriculum and achieve at the levels of which they are capable. Pupils report that teachers consistently check that they understand their learning before moving on, and this is reflected in their work books.

- The school's policy on providing feedback is used consistently and effectively by all teachers. Pupils capitalise on the helpful advice they receive by regularly improving aspects of their work. Teachers' feedback ensures that pupils know when they have been successful and how to improve their work. Pupils are given time to consolidate their understanding and practise the concepts and skills they are learning.
- Pupils with SEND are supported very well in their learning. The adults who support these pupils reshape activities and vary the questions they ask, so that these pupils make strong progress.
- Assessment systems are highly effective. Regular assessment enables teachers to identify and address misconceptions quickly. Rigorous processes are in place to ensure that assessment is accurate and reliable, including benchmarking with staff from different educational settings. Parents who spoke with inspectors confirmed the views expressed in Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, that they receive valuable information about how their children are progressing.
- Teachers pay precise and careful attention to the development of pupils' literacy skills. In particular, teachers ensure that they use the correct subject terminology, and they expect pupils to do the same. This was seen in a geography lesson about coastal management, for example. Additionally, at key stage 1, pupils show great tenacity in their writing and are strongly encouraged to think of words for themselves.
- The overwhelming majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey agree that their children are well taught.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Outstanding

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Positive, caring and mutually respectful relationships lie at the heart of the school's culture and ethos. The school's sense of community is distinctive, and many staff and pupils describe it as being one of 'family' and 'togetherness'. Parents strongly agree that their children are happy and well looked after at the school.
- The pastoral care provided in the school is exceptionally strong. All pupils know who they can talk to if they have any worries or concerns. Staff also ensure that those pupils who are particularly vulnerable are cared for very well, including the involvement of external agencies where this is necessary.
- The well-being of pupils and staff at the school is a high priority. The recruitment of a 'well-being' coach has strongly aided the curriculum for personal development, which covers a variety of themes about how pupils can look after their own physical, mental and emotional well-being. Inspectors observed this during a highly interactive assembly on mental health and developing resilience. Pupils were very responsive to the key messages delivered and say that this is typical of the school's provision. At key stage 1, pupils say that they enjoy participating in the 'daily mile'.
- Leaders have implemented a comprehensive programme for pupils' personal, social and health education, delivered by a specialist team of staff. A wide range of topics are covered, including a number of contemporary issues. Themes explored include healthy

lifestyles and relationships, online safety, managing stress and anxiety (including the impact of anxiety on men), forced marriage, and radicalisation and extremism. Pupils have a strong understanding about how they can keep themselves healthy and safe at age-appropriate levels.

- Leaders make purposeful arrangements to develop pupils' leadership skills. Examples include pupils in key stage 3 supporting the reading of younger pupils in the primary phase, sports leaders, 'eco' leaders, and anti-bullying ambassadors through the Diana Award.
- Pupils in all year groups report that incidents of bullying are extremely rare. Most are unaware of any instances of bullying. Those pupils who spoke with inspectors were unanimous in their agreement that they have high confidence in staff to deal with any issues which might arise. Parents agree.
- Leaders create many opportunities for personal development by organising community engagement events. Examples include local remembrance services, supporting elderly people, taking responsibility for clearing the environment of litter and raising funds for charity. These strongly support the development of pupils' understanding about spiritual, moral, social and cultural themes.
- Pupils benefit from a well-thought-out curriculum for careers education, advice and guidance, particularly at key stage 3. All pupils in this key stage have had access to impartial careers advice, which is prioritised for pupils who are disadvantaged or with SEND. This programme, together with high-quality teaching, is helping pupils to develop strong aspirations for their future. Leaders' plans include an assurance that all pupils will be able to participate in some form of meaningful work experience when they start Year 10. Links with local industry are strong.
- Pupils, staff and parents are proud of the school's inclusive culture, which has been recognised by the accreditation of the inclusion quality mark. Pupils, through their interactions with adults and with each other, know how to respect one another, including those with different backgrounds, lifestyle preferences and beliefs to their own. Diversity is celebrated at this school and reflects pupils' strong understanding of British values.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They are a credit to the school. Pupils say they are proud to be members of the school's community. This is reflected in their consistently smart appearance and positive attitudes to each other and towards visitors to the school. They are exceptionally polite and courteous young people.
- Pupils' conduct in lessons and around the school site is exemplary. They play together and socialise sensibly, respect and take responsibility for their environment and follow instructions from staff promptly. Inspectors noted there was no litter or graffiti anywhere on the school site. Pupils are very responsive to the high expectations of staff regarding their conduct and are remarkably punctual to their lessons.
- Exclusions due to poor behaviour are rare. Inspectors observed consistently positive attitudes to learning by pupils. School records show that the incidence of poor behaviour is very low.

- Attendance is above the national average. Pupils value their education and rarely miss a day from the school. Although the proportion of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND who are absent from the school is slightly higher than for other pupils, it remains good for these specific groups of pupils overall.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Outstanding

- Achievement is outstanding in the early years and at key stages 1 and 3. The progress children and pupils make is substantial. Year-on-year improvements in the early years and in pupils' skills in phonics show that standards are rapidly improving.
- The proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has been well above the national average for the past three years. This is due to the very effective support pupils receive in developing their reading skills and the high expectation that pupils read at home, as part of the home-library initiative.
- The school will receive its first published data for outcomes in key stage 1 in 2019. The school's own assessment information indicates that more pupils in Year 2 attain above the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics than was seen nationally in 2018. Similarly, the proportion of pupils attaining at greater depth in reading and writing is above the national averages from 2018 and is particularly high in mathematics.
- The attainment of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND in Year 2 is well above average. The school's own assessment information shows that these pupils are likely to exceed national expectations in reading and mathematics, at both the expected standard and at greater depth. These pupils seem likely to exceed national expectations in writing at the expected standard.
- Inspectors' scrutiny of pupils' books in English and mathematics at key stage 1 shows that pupils make strong progress across a broad range of subjects. Inspectors noted many examples of pupils' in-depth writing related to topic work on the Great Fire of London in history and their understanding of life cycles in science.
- Pupils' books at key stage 3 show pupils make similarly strong progress from their starting points across all subjects in the school's curriculum. This is underpinned by leaders' systems to check rigorously the accuracy and reliability of the tracking of the progress pupils make. The tracking shows that almost all pupils make at least the progress the school expects of them and some exceed this. Where gaps in learning are identified, support is swiftly put into place to help learners catch up.
- Reading is promoted well throughout the school, and leaders have implemented strategies to ensure that pupils in all year groups read widely and confidently. At key stage 1, this is strongly supported by the school's home-library strategy. The funding to help those pupils in Year 7 who are behind their peers in English and mathematics is used very well to help these pupils catch up quickly.
- There are effective support and guidance to ensure that pupils understand the choices available to them at the start of key stage 4.



- All pupils are very well prepared for the next phase of their education, especially for the new additional key stages 2 and 4, which commence in September 2019.

## Early years provision

## Outstanding

- The leadership of the early years is outstanding. The highly innovative curriculum, based on 'in the moment' learning and discovery, is highly responsive to the needs and interests of all children. For example, leaders incorporated challenge activities based on the topics of dinosaurs and expressing gratitude, in response to children's suggestions. The curriculum is broad and enthuses children.
- Children are purposefully engaged in a variety of learning activities within a highly stimulating environment, both indoors and outdoors. When appropriate, activities flow seamlessly between the two areas, including a newly grassed outdoor area this year. Classroom displays are attractive and relevant and are used creatively as a learning resource.
- Children enter the early years with knowledge, understanding and skills which are broadly typical for their age. By the time they leave the early years, the proportion of children who achieve a good level of development has been above the national average and has improved year on year for the past three years. The proportions of children exceeding the early learning goals across all areas of learning have also risen.
- Expectations are very high. Children quickly understand and follow the routines expected of them. They promptly follow all instructions from staff and have learned to take responsibility for their conduct. The behaviour of children is exemplary.
- The quality of teaching in the early years is consistently high. The interactions between children and adults are purposeful and exceptionally positive. In line with the school's policy, adults place a strong emphasis on discovery learning and children thinking for themselves. This was seen in their exploration of three-dimensional shapes, for example. Children show determination and resilience when they stick at a task for some time.
- Staff provide learning experiences which meet the needs of children, including those with complex SEND. The engagement of staff with external agencies is timely and effective, including with health and educational psychology services.
- Early reading and phonics skills are very well taught. Children use their skills to read and write, using the sounds they have learned. Teachers help children broaden their vocabulary. For example, during a phonics lesson, words such as 'royal' and 'voyage' were read by children and staff to ensure that they knew their meaning and relevance.
- Engagement with parents is strong. Parents contribute to the initial and ongoing assessments, through the use of the school's online journals. These are well maintained and demonstrate the ages and stages children have reached. Parents who spoke with inspectors say they are very happy with the provision their children receive.
- Leaders manage effectively the transition arrangements into the early years, so that children know staff well before they start school. Liaison with local nurseries and with parents is highly effective, including via home visits. Staff work very closely with key stage 1 teachers, so children are ready for the next phase of their education.

- Safeguarding is effective. Leaders ensure that all staff are appropriately trained about how to keep themselves and children safe. The site is secure and all statutory welfare requirements are met.

## School details

Unique reference number	142869
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10087326

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	All-through
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	4 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	543
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andre Gonzalez de Savage
Principal	Dan Rosser
Telephone number	01604 931 139
Website	<a href="http://www.woottonparkschool.org.uk">www.woottonparkschool.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:info@woottonparkschool.org.uk">info@woottonparkschool.org.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Wootton Park School is much smaller than the average-sized all-through school. It opened in September 2016. Currently the school is providing for children and pupils in the Reception classes, key stage 1 and key stage 3. The first classes in key stages 2 and 4 are due to commence in September 2019.
- The school is currently housed in temporary classrooms, while a new school building is constructed. It is anticipated that the new building will be ready for occupation from September 2020.
- The school forms the single academy of the Northamptonshire Free School Trust. The governing body is currently the appropriate authority. The school is also a member of the SWAN Teaching School Alliance.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is below the national average.

- The proportion of pupils with SEND is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is below average.
- The school used no alternative provision at the time of the inspection.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 22 lessons; most of these observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders. During these visits, inspectors spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also looked at a large sample of pupils' work in key stages 1 and 3, across a wide range of subjects.
- Inspectors spoke formally with three groups of pupils and met with pupils informally during lunch and breaktime.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed during lessons, and at breaktime and lunchtime. Inspectors also observed pupils' conduct during the changeover between lessons.
- Inspectors met with a range of school leaders, including the principal, other senior and middle leaders and the school's designated safeguarding officer and well-being coach.
- A meeting was held with a representative group of five governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- A wide range of documentation was examined, including the school's self-evaluation, pupils' performance information, safeguarding records, the minutes of the governing body meetings, behaviour and attendance records, records of bullying, curriculum plans, records relating to the provision for pupils with SEND and a range of school policies.
- The lead inspector considered the 147 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. He also met formally with a group of 10 parents during the inspection.
- The lead inspector also considered the 117 responses to Ofsted's pupils survey and the 60 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

## Inspection team

Chris Stevens, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Di Mullan	Her Majesty's Inspector
Eddie Wilkes	Ofsted Inspector

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